

## Environmental Readiness Director Gives Update on Environmental Programs

**WELCOME TO THE** winter 2010 issue of *Currents*. As we recover from the holiday season, I'd like to offer an update on some of the projects that have been underway during my first few months here as the director of the Chief of Naval Operations Environmental Readiness Division.

Let me first say how impressed I've been with the staff here and the many environmental experts with whom we interact on a daily basis. There is a lot of hard work going on as we continue to grapple with complex issues while following aggressive, often abbreviated timelines. I appreciate the professionalism and dedication I see across the broad spectrum of topics that demand our focused attention.

### Environmental Planning on the Move

We've been quite busy in our environmental planning. We're presently finishing up phase I (planning for at-sea training on ranges and operating areas) and looking ahead to phase II (planning for all at-sea training worldwide). To track our progress, we've been participating in monthly meetings with the Director of the Office of Protected Resources at the National Marine Fisheries Service. I believe we have established a great working relationship with their team. Along with our environmental planners, they have worked hard to help us meet range Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) schedules and compliance requirements. As we start preparing for our annual permit renewals under phase I and ramp up efforts under phase II, the workload is certainly going to increase. We will continue seeking opportunities to make that interagency teaming process as efficient and streamlined as possible.

clean and renewable energy and controlling greenhouse gas emissions. If you look at Executive Order 46156 (Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance), and consider the five related goals the Secretary of the Navy announced this past October at the Naval Energy Forum, it's clear we will face significant challenges in achieving

those goals in a timely manner. Luckily the Navy has great people on our team, and we're certainly up to these challenges. I look forward to assisting the Ashore Readiness Division and senior leadership in working these issues, whether in determining what existing technologies we may be able to use or considering other new and creative approaches to help meet those goals.

### Safeguarding the Bay

Executive Order 13508 (Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration) highlights the importance of the Chesapeake Bay as a vital natural, historic and economic resource, and asks federal agencies to show leadership in conserving and revitalizing the Bay. From a Navy standpoint, much of this work is being accomplished at the installation level under direction from Commander, Naval Installations Command (CNIC) and the regional commanders, but the Environmental Readiness Division is involved in policy coordination at the headquarters level. Members of my staff recently participated in an initial planning meeting on this topic with representatives from the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Environment,



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### Presidential Priorities: Clean, Green Energy

Since I've come on board here, we've been energized in some new directions in light of the new administration's focus on environmental issues. One such area has been

the Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Environment, Regional Environmental Coordinators from Army, Navy, and Air Force, and several Non-Government Organizations (NGO). I hope this dialogue will continue, and eventually lead both to partnering opportunities and

more chances to tell other organizations about the good work we're already doing to protect the Bay.

## Ocean Policy Task Force

Another item of note has been our office's support of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force. The task force, which is led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), was established by the Obama administration to develop a national policy and framework that allows for sustainable use of the oceans, Great Lakes and coastal areas for environmental, economic, recreational and security priorities. Our first order of business was to develop an interim report that explained our draft approach, and then we took that document to public hearings. I was able to attend hearings on the east and west coasts and hear feedback from a wide variety of people, ranging from individual citizens to representatives from environmental NGOs.

ment, all parties were able to reach an agreement that protected public health and allowed the title of the ship to be transferred to the city on 14 December 2009.

## Cleanup & Community Partnering

I recently had the opportunity to tour a series of environmental restoration efforts at Naval Station Norfolk. Groundwater contamination at one of the sites is being remediated through injection wells that accelerate the breakdown of volatile organic compounds. At another site, a landfill cap has been installed in order to safely reuse the area for sports fields. Near the base's carrier piers, they installed a cover on a landfill area and then built a parking lot over it. The parking lot was designed with a special gravel system that, along with a system of trees and catch basins, allows water to filter down through it rather than creating runoff into the Chesapeake Bay. This is an example of the type of responsible Bay stewardship I

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Participating on the task force was an eye-opening experience and an exciting chance to work closely with important partners in the environmental realm, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), CEQ and others. I look forward to assisting the task force over the next year as they plan to better utilize the oceans in a sustainable manner that will help marine ecosystems while taking into account our national security requirements.

## Ex-WISCONSIN Transfer

For several years, the Navy has been involved in an effort to officially transfer the ex-WISCONSIN (BB-64), an Iowa-class battleship originally commissioned in 1944, to the City of Norfolk for use as a floating museum. Before the transfer could occur, Norfolk and EPA had to reach an agreement on how to ensure that visitors are protected from polychlorinated biphenyls that may be present on the ship. Through strong coordination among the City of Norfolk, EPA, Naval Sea Systems Command, the Chief of Naval Operations Environmental Readiness Division, and the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Environ-

referenced earlier. As part of the restoration process, the base, CNIC and Naval Facilities Engineering Command are also cooperating with the City of Norfolk and the Virginia Department of Transportation to enable a road extension to be built through base property into Norfolk International Terminal to help relieve traffic congestion.

## Final Word

These activities are just a sampling of the good work that's been done over the past few months. We have a lot to look forward to in the next quarter and year, and I believe we've set a great foundation for what's to come. In the near future, the big items on our plate will likely be the continuation of our at-sea training EISes and the Program Objectives Memorandum (POM) 12 budget. We will be going into great detail reviewing thousands of line items in the Navy budget to verify that we are adequately funding the right projects at the right pace. We want to ensure the Navy is in compliance with the laws, and also make substantive progress on our environmental stewardship programs. 🌱

All the best,  
Rear Admiral Herman A. Shelanski  
Director, Environmental Readiness Division